

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1036
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1767

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CH UN PEPR SREF
SUBJ: PRC FOREIGN MINISTRY ISSUES STATEMENT ON VIETNAM REFUGEES

REF: PEKING 1702

1. SOME ADDRESSEES WILL HAVE SEEN THE PRC FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT OF JUNE 9 ON THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE SITUATION, WHICH WAS CARRIED BY NCNA. THE STATEMENT WAS ALSO GIVEN HEADLINE TREATMENT IN THE JUNE 10 PEOPLE'S DAILY AND ON LOCAL NEWS BROADCASTS. THE USE OF A FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT AS A VEHICLE FOR EXPOUNDING PRC VIEWS ON THE DEEPENING SPLIT BETWEEN PEKING AND HANOI RAISES THE QUARREL TO THE LEVEL OF AN OFFICIAL GOVERNMENTAL DISPUTE.

2. THE STATEMENT, COUCHED AS A REPLY TO THE VIETNAMESE
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FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT OF MAY 27, SPENDS A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME ADDRESSING THE LEGAL SITUATION OF THE CHINESE RESIDENTS IN VIETNAM. IT IS PARTICULARLY HARSH ABOUT WHAT IT CONSIDERS THE ILLEGAL AND INVOLUNTARY NATURALIZATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM'S CHINESE, WHICH WAS CARRIED OUT BY THE NGO DINH DIEM GOVERNMENT AND CONFIRMED AFTER 1975 BY HANOI.

3. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY PUBLICLY ADKNOWLEDGES THAT IN ORDER TO COPE WITH THE FLOW OF REFUGEES THE PRC HAS HAD TO WITHDRAW "A PORTION" OF ITS AID PROJECTS. IT NOTES THE LARGE AMOUNT OF AID PROVIDED TO VIETNAM "AT GREAT SACRIFICE" IN THE PAST THIRTY YEARS, STATES THAT DURING HIS ILLNESS (IN 1975) CHOU EN-LAI EXPLAINED THAT CHINESE AID TO POSTWAR VIETNAM WOULD NECESSARILY BE REDUCED, AND THAT VIETNAMESE LEADERS HAD AT THAT TIME SHOWED UNDERSTANDING FOR THIS REDUCTION. IT COMPLAINS THAT HANOI IS NOW "SLANDERING" CHINA ABOUT ITS AID REDUCTION, CAUSING "PAIN AND ANGER" TO THE CHINESE PEOPLE.

4. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT REJECTS HANOI'S CALL FOR NEGOTIATIONS, STATING THAT CHINA HAS TRIED TALKING TO VIETNAM MANY TIMES THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS WITHOUT RESULT. IT DECLARES THAT SINCE VIETNAM CLAIMS TO HAVE NO OVERSEAS CHINESE (I.E., SINCE THEY ARE ALL CONSIDERED VIETNAMESE) HANOI'S CALL FOR TALKS ON THE "HOA" QUESTION IS PURELY PROPAGANDA. THE STATEMENT MAKES NO MENTION OF PEKING'S INTENTION TO REPATRIATE REFUGEES BY SHIP.

5. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A PEOPLE'S DAILY COMMENTATOR'S ARTICLE ENTITLED "RUMORS CANNOT COVER UP FACTS," WHICH COVERS MUCH THE SAME GROUND IN SOMEWHAT HARSHER LANGUAGE. THE ARTICLE ACCUSES

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THE SOVIET UNION OF BEING THE "INSTIGATOR AND SUPPORTER" OF HANOI'S ACTIONS AGAINST OVERSEAS CHINESE. WHEREAS THE STATEMENT CONCLUDES WITH THE HOPE THAT THE TRADITIONAL SINO-VIETNAMESE FRIENDSHIP CAN BE RESTORED, THE COMMENTARY ENDS WITH A VEILED WARNING THAT THE VIETNAMESE ARE ONLY HURTING THEMSELVES.
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